

Among the staff of the House are leading experts in their fields, prize winners, men and women noted in their own right for achievements both professional and prosaic. Many know far more in their fields of expertise than any Member of Congress ever will. And yet they bite their lips and say "Yes, sir," when we hear their counsel yet choose to go another way.

Perhaps the greatest tribute to the selflessness of the staff is the fact that almost any one of them could leave this place tomorrow for jobs with better pay, better recognition, and much better hours, yet their dedication to the common weal binds them to this House. And we Members all wind up looking the better for it.

Fortunately, while we may not say "thank you" often enough, others sometimes take up the slack. And so it is with Debra Wada, a member of the Armed Services Committee staff.

Debra handles matters concerning military personnel for the committee, and does so with zeal and knowledge and grace. She is always looking out for the common soldier. Millions of Americans in uniform owe the improvement of their pay and benefits to Debra and her foresight and dedication. I trust her guidance, and even more admire the energy with which she works and lives.

I am not alone in that sentiment. Not long ago, Debra was recognized by the National Guard Association of the United States, who presented her with their Militia Award. In their words, she was selected "for her exceptional dedication and effort to improve the status, welfare and professionalism of the enlisted members of the National Guard of the United States." That is indeed an honorable achievement, particularly at a time when military personnel are working so hard on our behalf.

While the Association did not formally recognize the effervescent personality that suffuses her work and brings joy to those around her, I have no doubt that those qualities played a role in her selection as well.

Debra has overcome a great obstacle to get where she is today; she was formerly employed in the other body of Congress. I compliment her on surmounting this challenge.

Mr. Speaker, people wonder how Members of Congress can vote one minute on education, the next on health, the next on defense, and understand so many issues in enough depth to make good decisions. The answer is that we are all fortunate to be surrounded by an ocean of talent. People like Debra Wada make our job possible. I salute her not only for her award, but for the unrecognized work that she and other staff professionals perform all year round.

AN APPRECIATION AND TRIBUTE
TO NANCY WILSON

HON. JOHN LEWIS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 7, 2004

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. Speaker, I join my fellow colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus to salute and pay tribute to Nancy Wilson, a living American legend. When one thinks of Nancy Wilson, the word that immediately comes to mind is sophistica-

tion. She is one of the last in line of elegant entertainers who performed naturally onstage exuding refinement, poise and grace.

For years her style has blurred the lines between jazz, R&B and pop, redefining the essence of good music. With a career that has transformed, been translated, and ultimately survived over forty years in the music industry, Nancy Wilson has proven herself as more than merely an entertainer—she is a world-class interpreter of everything from blues and gospel to Broadway showtunes. She is just as at home in front of a full orchestra as she is in front of a jazz quartet. Her multifaceted stage presence has undoubtedly contributed to her staying power.

Born in Chillicothe, Ohio in 1937, Nancy Wilson came of age to the sounds of Nat "King" Cole, Louis Jordan, Dinah Washington, Jimmy Scott, Bull Moose Jackson, Ruth Brown, Billy Eckstein, and LaVern Baker. At age 15 she entered a voice contest with other high school students and so impressed the judges that she won her own television show, Skyline Melodies. Later in her career, Ms. Wilson was a popular guest of TV variety shows from Johnny Carson and Andy Williams to Flip Wilson and Arsenio Hall. Her series' appearances include I Spy, Room 222, Hawaii Five-O, The Cosby Show, New York Undercover, and the films The Big Score and Meteor Man. Noting Wilson's versatility as an artist, her acting talent should be no surprise. As she once said: "Each song is a little play; a little vignette." Her acting simply turned an outstanding career to a stellar one.

Since her beginnings, Nancy Wilson has given voice to those ineffable feelings of heartache, heartbreak, and those first soul-stirring moments when one falls in love. Songs like "Guess Who I Saw Today," "Save Your Love For Me" and "Like in Love" sung in that sultry signature tenor, have given the world a soundtrack for the love experience. Her songs have personified love; but more than that her songs have given us the assurance that someone else has experienced love deeply.

Nancy Wilson has without question served us all well from the stage and on the airwaves—her voice a soothing balm to life's multiple wounds. But her service extends beyond the entertainment realm. Over the years she has contributed her time and energy to causes such as the Martin Luther King Center for Social Change, the Cancer Society, and the National Heart Association. She has been the recipient of numerous awards from the United Negro College Fund, CORE, and the NAACP including the NAACP Image Award. She is an Essence Award winner and has been honored with the Paul Robeson Humanitarian Award. She has received honorary degrees from the Berkeley School of Music and Columbus Central State College.

As we honor this great entertainer, this great artist, and this great American, we give thanks for the inspiration future artists will find in her voice, her life, and in Nancy. Although we know no one will ever fill the shoes of Nancy Wilson, we already find traces of her—the voice of pure velvet, the self-assured performance, and the entrancing gaze—in the burgeoning songstresses of today. We only find traces—bits and pieces of her and never the whole because there will only ever be one Nancy Wilson.

TRIBUTE TO LUCIOUS WOOTEN,
ROSIE BRAISHER, IRENE CHARLOTTE
LOTTE SMITH, ELSIE LOUISE
LAROY AND BESSIE GILMORE

HON. FRED UPTON

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 7, 2004

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to five residents of the South Haven Nursing and Rehabilitation Community, in southwest Michigan who have achieved the great milestone of 100 years of life. This grand feat is especially important today, since these very special individuals have lived for a century or more and in two different millenniums.

The vast experiences and accomplishments of these five people is awe-inspiring. I can only imagine the wonder and amazement of watching our country progress and grow through two world wars, international flight, the Internet, cell-phones, and the many other advances that have occurred over the last century.

It is my fortunate honor to extend my very best wishes to Lucious Wooten who became 107 years old on February 6, 2004, Roxie Braisher who became 100 years old on February 22, 2004, Irene Charlotte Smith who became 100 years old on June 1, 2004, Elsie Louise LaRoy who became 100 years old on June 29, 2004, and Bessie Gilmore who became 102 years old on July 16, 2004.

Along with the entire Sixth District of Michigan, it gives me great pleasure to send wishes for much love, health, and happiness to each in the years ahead.

TRIBUTE TO YU-AI-KAI'S 30TH
ANNIVERSARY

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 7, 2004

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge and commend Yu-Ai-Kai, a Japanese American Community Senior Service, based in the San Jose enclave of Japantown on their 30th anniversary of providing services to the senior citizen community.

Yu-Ai-Kai's mission is to advance the health, education and well being of older adults in the community. Yu-Ai-Kai does this by developing cultural programs, providing educational resources about ailments affecting older adults, and making all of its services available in various languages. These services are open to all. No one is excluded.

The activities hosted by Yu-Ai-Kai are as varied and diverse as the community they serve. Activities such as their annual crab and spaghetti feed and springtime walk/run race help fund Yu-Ai-Kai's efforts to provide a healthy and supportive environment for senior citizens.

In addition, Yu-Ai-Kai's volunteers assist in outreach to homebound seniors and provide invaluable services such as transportation to doctor appointments, shopping, and regular visits just to make sure no one is too isolated.

My district office is located within a few blocks of Yu-Ai-Kai, and I can tell you from first-hand experience that I am proud of the